questions of them. They told me for example they were washing themselves and their children only every three or four days. During the hotter months more when possible. They do not use soap because they believe it is bad for the skin and causes disease. We also discussed education and school. None of them went to school and they would not be the one to decide if their daughters attend school or not. During the time I was with them one of the wife's nieces was visiting. She had attended school in Kabul and then the Science University for three years. She was married a year ago to a young Afghan who is now studying in France. She is awaiting a visa to be able to join him. While she is waiting in Pakistan he asked her to wear a veil, not to go out, not to study, etc. Her quality of life in Pakistan as a refugee is a drastic change.

We also talked about the enormous changes in the life of the second wife. She was working for four years in a factory in Kabul. She was wearing western clothes and no veil. She had to begin wearing the veil when she was married, upon his orders. She was required to stop working upon their engagement. Those of her children born in Afghanistan were delivered in a hospital. Here she has been asked by her husband to stay at home for delivery. When I asked them what were the main changes in their lives since becoming refugees, I received amazing answers: "It is almost the same, work at home, children. But, my family is not here and I cannot see my mother when I am tired. Life in Afghanistan was much easier, no problem. Here it is very hard. I cry a lot and I am always scolding the children. There are too many children."

Another responded, "It is the same thing day after day, children, cooking, cleaning and washing the house."

Talking about the purdah system, they told me, "In Afghanistan and in Pakistan it is the same. It is our husband who is doing the shopping. We go out only when someone dies and we all go together. The purdah system is very strict and no man except the immediate family is allowed inside the compound."

"For me it was different in Afghanistan; I was not wearing the veil. But, slowly after my marriage and more now as I am a refugee, the purdah system increases." But in general they all agree that the purdah system is stronger here, because Pakistan is not their country. There are too many people and they say they do not want Pakistanis to have a bad image of Afghan women. With their families scattered and divided, the close family relationships in Afghanistan are difficult to maintain. Being in Pakistan makes it harder for them to maintain what had been normal family relationships. As refugees they are surrounded by strange and unrelated people. The purdah system is in effect a defence to protect them from the unknown outsiders - that is, people outside of the extended family.

Another topic discussed was Jehad (the Holy War), and what it means to the women, mothers, wives and sisters. The main response was not what Jehad meant for them, but why they had to leave Afghanistan. "We left," they said, "because of the Soviets. We were scared, the Parchamis (Afghan communist faction) were forcing their way into our homes. They were throwing boiling water on the students in the streets. We were scared of the war and afraid of dying."

We also talked about raising their children. Food and nutrition was a major concern of theirs about living in the camps. We talked about breast feeding. They breast feed for two years. Some of them said they begin to add food of more consistency after three months. They complain that there are too many children and not enough money to feed them all. They rationalise, "It is God who gives children." The other wives laugh and say that their husbands do not want them to take contraceptives. They say they breast feed for two years so that another child will not follow as quickly. One told me, "I would like to have two or three children." She has five and says, "Now life is not easy for me."

Life is also difficult because there are two wives. They both admit the situation causes problems. The first wife said, "When my husband told me he loved me he was an idiot, because if he did, why should he take another wife? Before he was giving a lot to me and my children. Now there is fighting all the time. She hits my children. And our children are always fighting with each other. Since she has been here, I have been sick and I am crying all the time."

The other wife said, "I married my husband because I loved him. My parents did not choose him. I knew he had another wife and I know I have made a mistake. I am not happy either, life is not kind in this respect. I do not talk a lot, but my heart is sad."

The same reasons caused this family to flee to Pakistan as the previous family. But in this particular case, the complaints and problems were not primarily a result of their refugee status. Most of the problems I observed were of a family nature that would have been problems wherever they were. By not relating tales of Afghanistan to their children they were in a way giving up and surrendering to the situation. They were so engulfed in their particular family problems that there is no time for memories. Much less optimistic dreams of the future.

Akora Khattak Family

For the third family I chose an Uzbek family from the Samangan area on the border with the Soviet Union. It took them one month to travel to Pakistan as refugees, four years ago. There are only 30 Uzbek families in this camp. They built their current home in an isolated area between the Hazara, Kuchi and Pushtoon areas of the camp. Their relationships with the different ethnic groups are strained. The Uzbeks, being the last to arrive, have no water well. This requires them to obtain water from a neighbouring area, which provokes conflicts each time they draw water. The same problems develop in the gathering of wood for cooking. These ethnic tensions, while apparent, bring smiles from the Uzbeks who say the same situation existed in Afghanistan. In this camp, however, they are a bit afraid as there are only 30 Uzbek families. Life is difficult with other Afghans, but they say they are all here because of the Soviets and they all have the same Motherland. When the Soviets leave, they say they will all go back home.

One young woman told me, "I am taking my child on my back and I am walking back to Afghanistan without shoes, if necessary." Even if their primary desire is to return to Afghanistan, today they must face the every-day problems of survival in the camps.

Among the 30 families, I chose this family. The family structure is shown in Appendix 3.

All of these people are living in the same compound. The living situation can be seen in Appendix E. Their living compounds in Afghanistan are outlined in Appendix F.

The six adult women in their day to day conversation do not complain about their living conditions as did the previous two families. But they explain calmly, but frequently, tearfully, how life has changed for them.

Food was one item of conversation which I readily understood after spending time with them. For breakfast and lunch we had light tea with no sugar and brown bread. They did not have tandoor bread because they cannot operate a tandoor oven due to the lack of wood in this area. As a result bread and tea are the sole ingredients of the first two meals of the day. For dinner, eaten about 5.30 or 6.00 in the evening, we were given bread, a vegetable such as potatoes or cauliflower and tea. It is therefore understandable why they would complain about their food situation, particularly when compared with their diets in Afghanistan. This consisted of rice, fruits (such as apples and grapes), butter, milk, cheese, and meat (sheep).

They also complained about the bread. Tandoor nan (oven baked bread) which was their staple in Afghanistan was far superior to Tawa nan (cooked on an open air round piece of metal placed over a fire).

In talking about clothing, they showed me that they had but one change of clothes. They say they wash one set of clothes while wearing the other. These women own a sewing machine and are quite skilled at sewing. However, they do not have the money or resources to purchase materials or threads. They say, "Here there is no work for us. When the bread is cooked there is nothing to do, no house to clean, no food to cook, no garden to care for (because of a lack of water) and no materials to sew. In Afghanistan we always had something to do: the meals to prepare, the house to tidy up, fruits to gather and we were embroidering and weaving kelims (Uzbek variety of woven carpets)".

In discussing the change in their lives they constantly refer to the bombings of their village, the war, their children being so afraid that after arriving in Pakistan they hid whenever they would hear or see an airplane.

In describing the conditions which drove them to Pakistan, one woman began crying, "In the bombing I lost two sons, my younger brother and my house was completely destroyed. My husband was wounded in the Jehad and has both legs amputated. I have nothing left."

Another came with just herself and four children, by foot and with no money. None of these women have been to school. They have no idea of time. I was present for one humorous incident. One 14 year old daughter was offered a watch by her future husband. She was very proud, but unable to tell the time. I tried to teach her how to use her watch. The other women, while interested, were laughing. The men were saying, "You are wasting your time, she will never understand". Despite this lack of education and the fact that this is the poorest family I visited, all of their children of school age are attending schools in the camps - boys and girls.

The children do not appear very healthy. But they seem to be well taken care of. Everyone is talking to the children about life in Afghanistan and telling them stories, unlike the second family that could not bring themselves to create these visions in their children. Those who were old enough to remember the fear of the aircraft in Afghanistan say, "Here there are no planes and no tanks, but there is no water, nothing to eat, the weather is bad and we are always sick. Afghanistan, even with the war, was a nice place to be."

The son's wife, aged 19, said, "I want to go back to Afghanistan to see my parents and brothers. All my family is in Afghanistan." And then she began to cry.

The eight women present while we were talking all agree not to have many children, just three or four. One of them, on her way out of Afghanistan, went to Kabul and asked for pills so she would not have children while in Pakistan. Her husband agreed it was a good idea. But she was sick and had to stop taking the pill. She is now four months pregnant. While talking about children, they told me they breastfeed their babies for at least two years. If another child was not born during this period she might continue for up to three or three and a half years. They are doing so for two reasons: when they stop breastfeeding their children cry constantly and want to be held while the women are working; and they are sick more often. Secondly, and each person told me this, it is a natural contraceptive. While breastfeeding they are not as susceptible to becoming pregnant.

Their child care is different in Pakistan from Afghanistan. Some say they were washing their children every day after cooking bread - outside in the summer and in a heated room in the winter. And changing their clothes every day. They also prepared special meals for their children. Here, because of the water problems they are unable to wash their children more frequently than every two weeks. The children are also fed the same meagre diet as the adults. All agree that they cannot care for their children as before and it is a shame. All children are born at home, as was the case in Afghanistan, with a sister or mother to assist. In this village, when a baby was born, a sheep was killed and meat and rice was given to the new mother. She was then covered with the skin of the sheep for two or three days so she would recover quickly. They had no hospitals in their region of Afghanistan. Anyway, they say they would not go to a hospital to give birth because it is not good.

When the baby is born it is the mother or another woman who cuts the umbilical cord. They wash the baby with a little bit of hot water and immobilise him for the first week of his life with swaddling clothes.

For these women the purdah system is less than it was in Afghanistan, a contrast with the other two families. For example, they say that in Afghanistan when a son of seven years or older would enter a room, they would cover their faces. In Pakistan they do not do this. In the camp there is no purdah because they have to fetch water. In Afghanistan a girl would only go to Madrassa (Koranic school) until age seven. In the camps they go to school the same as boys.

As in the second family, another problem for the women was not connected with being a refugee. Being one of two wives they said was also a problem. The second wife told me, "I didn't like my husband. My parents chose him. I knew he already had a wife and he was much older than me. I was 14. The first night after the marriage we were all in the same room. My husband, his first wife and me. She was separated from us by only a curtain. After three days, he went back to her. For two years he would spend three nights with her and three nights with me. Since, he is always with me with the exception of one night a month. For the past two years the first wife is no longer working in the house. The daughter-in-law bakes bread and I do the laundry. I do all the cooking. Before it was four days for me and four days for the first wife."

They say their husband buys the same material, in the same colour, for both of them and for their children. The first wife at the end of our talk called me aside and told me privately, "During one year I didn't sleep. I was very jealous and nervous. After this I began treating her as my daughter. She is very kind to my children. She is a very good person. And now I can rest. I'm too old." While talking on this subject, they asked how it was in my country. When I told them it was not possible for a man to have two wives, they all agreed it was good. They said that since they were in Pakistan it was difficult to have one wife and therefore nobody takes a second anymore. The men cannot afford to do it.

We talked as the day progressed. Each day begins early at 5.30 a.m. with prayer. Everybody prays five times a day. The daughter-in-law bakes bread. The children get ready to go to school, eating nan from the day before. When the cleaning of tents and rooms is completed there is nothing left to do. They are suffering from inactivity and boredom. In Afghanistan, in the mornings they would work caring for the animals and tend the fields. They also prepared meals and took care of their homes. The young unmarried girls would collect their trousseau and make other preparations for marriage. They were sewing the long traditional coats (Chappans). Here they have no money to purchase material and they only do a small amount of embroidery that the men sell in the camp bazaar to the other ethnics, particularly the Kuchis (Nomads).

They are fighting each day to make life more bearable because life for them in Pakistan is a nightmare and they are living in the hope of returning to Afghanistan.

CONCLUSION

Living with these women in their camps was a great experience. It was as if I had removed the veil from their lives. I discovered a closed world. A world far removed from Western culture. But under the veil and behind the walls I found that they were not as different as first impressions led me to believe. These women are as women everywhere. Their problems as women are similar to problems women face anywhere. But, they are Afghans. They are raised, educated and always under the domination of the father, their brothers, and their husbands - having no right to make decisions. Despite this they are very often the masters within the walls. They are respected and loved. When the veil is removed, they are full of life, humour and feelings. Even as refugees living in camps, they are the ones who make the day to day existence bearable. They are ready to sacrifice everything to be back in their country, back on their land - even their children. Their main goal and responsibility is to preserve their culture. Changes exist and cannot be denied. But they are doing everything they can to preserve their way of life, their way of belief and their outlook on life. They do not reject their culture or their situation as a woman in the Afghan culture. On the contrary, they are prepared to fight to preserve their role as the Women of Afghanistan.

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IV. ABSTRACTS OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION

AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN : FROM EMERGENCY TOWARD SELF-RELIANCE. REPORT ON THE FOOD RELIEF SITUATION AND RELATED SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS. GENEVA, 1984.

Hanne Christensen

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

This survey is part of a research programme into the problems of refugees' social integration in the Third World, and the second phase of a survey initiated by UNRISD on the Afghan refugee situation in Pakistan. The first phase focused on Baluchistan. The second phase, carried out in autumn 1983, was carried out to evaluate the food situation and related socio-economic aspects among Afghan refugees in the NWFP and their relationships with surrounding local people.

Four questions were selected for evaluation:

a) From which sources do the refugees in designated villages obtain their food and income?

b) What are the economic and social links between refugees and the surrounding local population?

c) To what extent does the free provision of food and relief items serve as an incentive and/or disincentive to the refugees to engage in economically productive activities?

d) What feasible approaches exist for identifying and assisting vulnerable groups?

"The survey was to provide decision oriented information on refugee needs with relation to their food situation and uses of relief..."

The survey was designed as a spot test enquiry. It was based on five weeks of field work in Pakistan in September/October, 1983, and documentary research in Geneva. Refugees from about 100 refugee households were interviewed in depth.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past eight years many people have recognised the cultural changes that have taken place among the millions of Afghan refugees now residing in Pakistan. These refugees have had to adapt to a new and somewhat restricted environment in their country of refuge in order to survive. Refugee relief workers, UN personnel and anthropologists have studied some of the adaptations. Among other things many of them are now wondering how these adaptations would one day affect the ability of the refugees to smoothly resettle in Afghanistan, if that country is ever freed from outside occupation. Of special concern to these few researchers are the effects of the refugees' new environment on the new generation of Afghans born in the refugee camps or in urban refugee communities. Considering the large number of refugees (est.3,000,000), these questions are important to Pakistan as well as for the future of Afghanistan.

Research work done to date has, for the most part, been coupled with efforts to direct international aid in the provision of income generating, health, education and basic infrastructure assistance.

A. Scope of Work

The purpose of this report is to: (1) present a brief study of Afghan urban and rural women in NWFP; (2) locate, categorise and summarise the available literature/studies done in this area so that future researchers can find in one place a listing of relevant documents, authors and their whereabouts.

This report was commissioned by the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees (ARC). In order to gather information, relief agencies in Peshawar were contacted to find out what studies had been undertaken and these reports have been abstracted within.

B. Field Investigations

Also included as a separate part of this Compilation of Resources is a brief report on a short term survey of Afghan women living in refugee camps in NWFP carried out in November 1987.

A "global" view of the changes among the Afghans and their way of life, especially among women, is presented.

The survey starts with an introduction dealing with the "evolution of refugee relief in Pakistan" and the "evolution of the refugee situation" followed by the refugee intake and food distribution experience and the refugee food intake in Pakistan: Dir district and Orakzai Agency food distribution systems.

The next part of the survey describes:

The refugee communities: appearance, food supply, the compound, the daily routine, other refugee activities, Purdah, refugee attitudes and opinions, commentary.

The remaining sections discuss:

Refugees' interaction with the local people : division of labour in the camps and income.

COMMUNITY SURVEY: AN ATTEMPT TO ASSESS THE LEARNING NEEDS OF 18 COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE, PAKISTAN.

Manfred Wehrmann

Pak-German Bas-Ed
"Basic Education In Areas Affected By The Influx Of Refugees, NWFP."
Peshawar, April, 1987.

The community survey described in this report has been carried out in 18 of the 24 communities where Pak-German Bas-Ed is assisting pilot Pakistani schools in the districts of Peshawar and Mardan.

The result of the survey would serve as a basis for future activities in the areas of non-formal education. The main purpose of the survey is also to see if it will be possible to combine the Pakistani students and Afghan refugee students by proposing the same courses like:

- health, hygiene, child-care
- literacy
- gardening
- vegetable growing
- sports and games
- poultry raising
- soap production

After presenting the situation of non-formal education in the NWFP and the presentation and methodology of the community survey, the results of the survey are given:

- general results
- detailed observations
- position of education in the community
- limited concept of non-formal education
- unrealistic expectations

- number of people interested in training courses
- different types of training courses
- requested activities
- advantages and disadvantages of recommended non-formal education activities

- poultry raising
- tree planting
- child-care
- literacy
- English language
- vegetable gardening
- sewing / tailoring
- first aid
- embroidery
- baking
- formal training beyond primary school
- Arabic

In conclusion, the study finds enough interest in non-formal education to justify training courses in:

- tree planting
- poultry raising
- child-care
- literacy
- English

The study also presents the way that women participate in female community meetings.

DEUX CHANTS D'EXIL DES KIRGHIZ DU PAMIR AFGHAN
(Two Songs of Escape of the Afghan Pamir Kirghiz)

Remy Dor

Central Asian Survey
Volume 4, No 2, 1985
Article, Pages 83 to 103.

After a quick historical background of the Kirghiz ethnic situation, the article presents two songs. These songs reflect the mind and feelings of people having left their homeland. Both songs give a good image of the various feelings which these people are experiencing. The songs are presented as a part of cultural heritage which must not be lost. Remy Dor says, "Let's hope that with better living conditions the Kirghiz will start again their famous and rich oral tradition."

1. INTERIM REPORT ON A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES, PRIMARILY FOR WOMEN, AMONG AFGHAN REFUGEES IN NWFP PAKISTAN. FEBRUARY 1983

2. TOWARDS SELF RELIANCE OF AFGHAN REFUGEES? AUGUST 1983

Inger Boesen

Danish Refugee Council

A study of the need and feasibility of establishing income-generating and skill-training programmes for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, particularly with a view to women.

Inger Boesen reflects on the situation of the Afghan refugees who settled in Pakistan several years ago - their emerging life of dependency and the slow process of disintegration of their identity. She then asks whether it is possible to establish income-generating and skill-training programmes for these Afghan refugees.

After a quick historical background, the report presents a survey of the refugee general situation, including the needs of everyday life (living conditions in the refugee village, food, household equipment, housing, schools, a mosque, etc.), keeping in mind their ethnic division and handicraft tradition.

The third part of the survey is a special case study: "The Survey in Baghicha Refugee Camp, Mardan District." This camp is taken as an example for a possible start of skill training and income-generating projects. The survey takes into consideration the village habitat: the health and health care situation, the water and sanitation environment, the diversity and unity of the refugees, the role of Islam, the education possibilities, social organisation, and the place of the women and purdah in the refugee world.
The report ends with an affirmation of the Afghan refugees' needs, especially the needs affecting mental health. The report proposes creating occupations and thus shows the feasibility of skill and handicraft training among the Afghan refugees, even among the women.

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN INQUIRY COMMISSION ON DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Michael Barry, Johan Lagerfelt and Marie Odile Terrenoire

Central Asian Survey, 1986,
Volume 5, Number 1, Pages 65-100

This inquiry deals with displaced persons in Afghanistan. It describes the results of a mission by the International Inquiry Commission in Autumn, 1985. This Commission was divided into two teams: one working inside Afghanistan in September and October, 1985, in the provinces of Paktia, Logar, Wardak and Ghazni and the other one working inside Pakistan in October and November, 1985, among the recently arrived refugees.

The inquiry, after a preamble of general information about Afghanistan and historical facts, deals with the surveys of the two teams.

1) Depopulation of villages, concluding: "an over 700 kilometers trek though the four eastern Afghan provinces of Paktia, Logar, Wardak and Ghazni yields a rate of depopulation of over 50% by Autumn, 1985."

2) Refugees: "the Commission encountered 892 refugees during the six nights when its trek coincided with one of the main refugee paths to Pakistan."
Seven descriptions of caravans and interviews of refugees.

3) Internal refugees: description and reason for leaving.

4) Atrocities: description in Logar and around Ghazni.

The field mission to Pakistan or the second team had three purposes: "to localise the exact territorial origin of recent refugees from the north, to gather the most recent information concerning Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and to elicit causes, circumstances and present conditions of the refugee outflow.

Specific information is presented on:

1) The scars of war: encounters with psychic depression and breadth of despair especially among the refugee women population.

2) Problems with numbers: no one really knows the exact number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

3) Eye-witness testimony of questioned refugees: interviews of refugee women recently arrived from the north of Afghanistan and circumstances and conditions of their trek to Pakistan.

MARGINALITY AND MIGRATION : CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE AFGHAN REFUGEE PROBLEM

David Busby Edwards

International Migration
Volume 20, No 2, 1986,
Review Journal. Pages 313 to 325

Research funded by Fulbright-Hays pre-doctoral research fellowship. Research grants from the National Science Foundation and the Rackham School of the University of Michigan.

The research on Afghan refugees in Pakistan was carried out between October, 1982 and June, 1984.

"This article will attempt to provide some basic insight into the society and culture of the Afghan refugees and will consider what impact dislocation and settlement have had specifically on tribally-organised Pakhtun people."

He studies the attributes "necessarily associated with Pathan identity":

- patrilineal descent
- belief in Islam
- practice of Pashtoon custom : providing hospitality (melmastia), reliance on the tribal council (jirga), maintenance of female seclusion (purdah).

David Busby Edwards concludes: "The most damaging aspect to traditional Pashtoon society and traditional notions of cultural identity is not the upheaval of migration but rather the impositions and constraints of resettlement."

OPERATIONS MANUAL FOR AFGHAN REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAMME IN PAKISTAN

Jeral Ahtone, Altaf-Ur-Rahman Khan, Virginia M. Mermel,
Jeanne Betsock Stillman

UNHCR,
Chief Commissionerate
Afghan Refugees,
Government of Pakistan.

Islamabad, Pakistan, 1986

Extensive guidelines have been produced for health workers who are providing health services to Afghan refugees in Pakistan and this is an attempt to collate these in one manual.

This manual is mostly technical and medical, but the first part: MEETING THE NEEDS OF AFGHAN REFUGEES, and the second part: SCOPE OF HEALTH SERVICES, gives a good overview of the health care situation among the Afghan refugees.

The first 49 pages is a quick reference to the socio-economic situation and a presentation of the major health needs followed by the different roles of the Pakistan Government, UNHCR, and private voluntary organisations. The third part presents the scope of services offered and their organisation.

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WFP AND UNHCR

The World Food Programme and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Joint Mission

WFP / UNHCR Mission
Pakistan, July, 1986, to assess the 1987 food aid requirements for refugees.
August, 1986. Rome, Italy.

The WFP UNHCR mission visited 32 refugee villages in NWFP, Baluchistan and Punjab. Meetings were held with refugee officials at the Federal, Provincial and local levels. The 1985 mission report provided a clear background of the Afghan refugee operations and explained in detail the registration, distribution and administration systems involved. The 1986 mission report concentrates on reviewing substantive changes in refugee operations during the past year and providing an updated assessment of the food aid needs of Afghan refugees. The report takes into consideration topics such as:

- P8 registration system
- P11 deliveries and distribution of food
- P18 food distribution management
- P21 commodity, acceptability and utilisation-
- P23 general nutritional considerations
- P26 nutritional status of the camps' population
- P28 emergency requirements and food basket
- P30 employment opportunities and income

C. Literature Review

Presented herein is a bibliography of relevant articles, studies and reports that were found. This bibliography presents titles, author, date of work or research, as well as information on how to obtain copies of the article or publications. Also contained in this report is an abstract of each of these documents, which briefly outlines the subject of the article/study/report so that future researchers can decide if obtaining it would be worthwhile to his or her work.

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SUSTAINING AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN:
REPORT ON THE FOOD SITUATION AND RELATED SOCIAL ASPECTS.

Hanne Christensen

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)
1983

This survey is part of a research programme on the installation and integration of refugees, carried out by Hanne Christensen in Autumn, 1982.

To carry out this survey five questions were selected for evaluation:

a) From which sources do the refugees obtain their food?
b) What are the links, with regard to food, between the refugees and the surrounding local population?
c) How does the division of labour between male and female refugees relate to food issues?
d) What is the relationship between free provision of food and willingness to engage in income-generating activities?
e) Are there vulnerable groups in the refugee population which do not obtain adequate food supplies?

The survey was based on documentation studies supplemented by one month of field work in Pakistan.

The survey starts with: historical background, influx into Pakistan, conditions in Pakistan, 1978, the refugee installation in Pakistan, and the refugees' former lifestyle in Afghanistan.

Part 2:
General conditions in the refugee villages, village organisation.

Part 3:
The food situation in the villages: distribution issues, the food situation of refugees in Baluchistan.

Part 4:
Related social aspects: social organisation, relationships with the Pakistani and international NGO administrators, local setting.

In the conclusion Hanne Christensen gives answers to the five questions asked at the beginning of the survey. The outlook is presented as optimistic, the refugees are successfully integrating into the local Pakistani socio-economic situation.

APPENDICES

TRADITION AND DYNAMISM AMONG AFGHAN REFUGEES : A REPORT ON INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN.

Dharam Ghai, Zubeida Ahmad, Andrea Singh

- International Labour Organisation
- UNHCR
- Government of Pakistan

- Report, 1983

This report is the final summary of a mission on income-generating activities for Afghan refugees. The mission spent four weeks in Pakistan, three of which were taken up with field visits in Baluchistan and NWFP.

The main purpose of the mission was to prepare project proposals for income-generating activities and associated training requirements for Afghan refugees. The report presented ten project proposals, but the important aspects of the report are contained in Chapter II.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND:

a) Demographic and settlement patterns

b) Social and cultural features:
   - family organisation
   - tribal relations
   - impact of Islam

c) Education, training and skills:
   - literacy and education
   - skills development and training
   - old and new skills
   - major skill categories

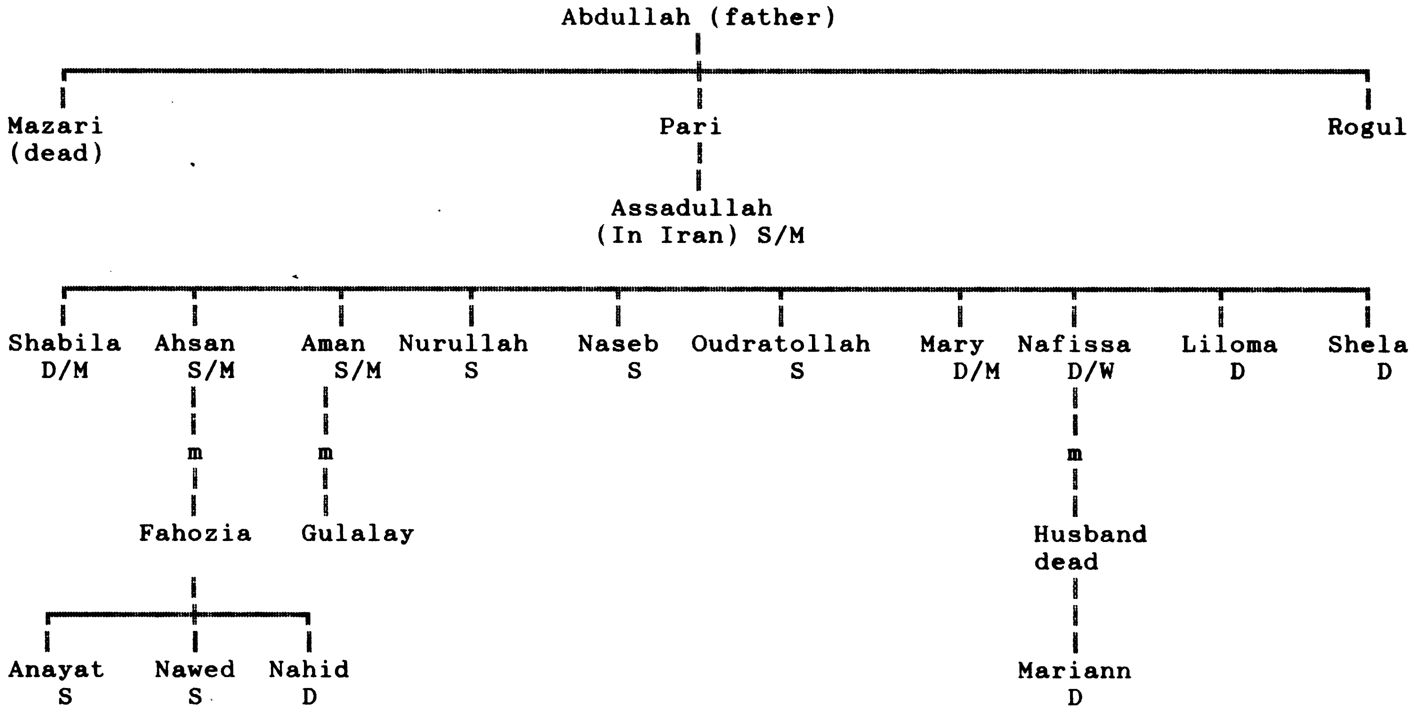
Chapter III describes the economic profile:

- Pattern of economic activities
- Organisation of economic activities
- Employment and migration
- Living standards
- Interaction with local economy

The rest of the report is a description of ten project proposals.

APPENDIX 1

Nasir Bagh Family

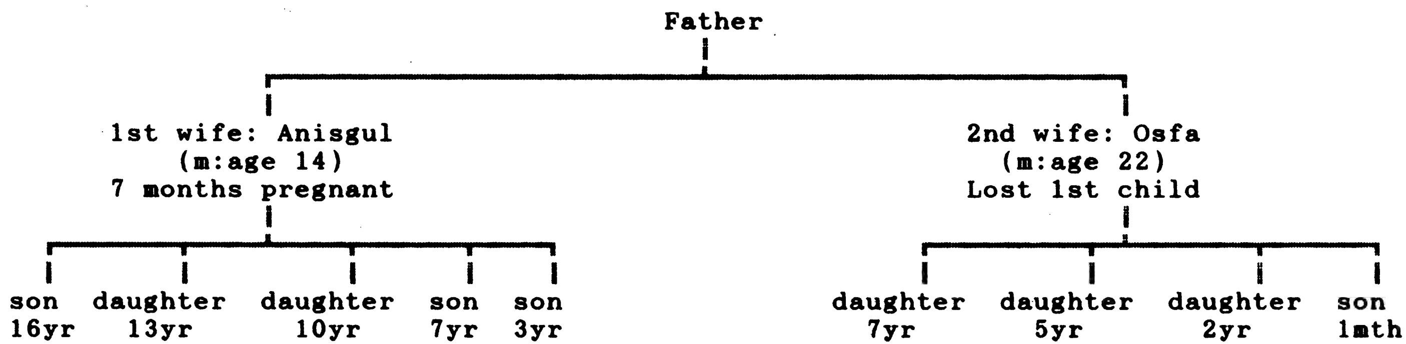


Key

D - daughter
S - son
M - married
W - widowed

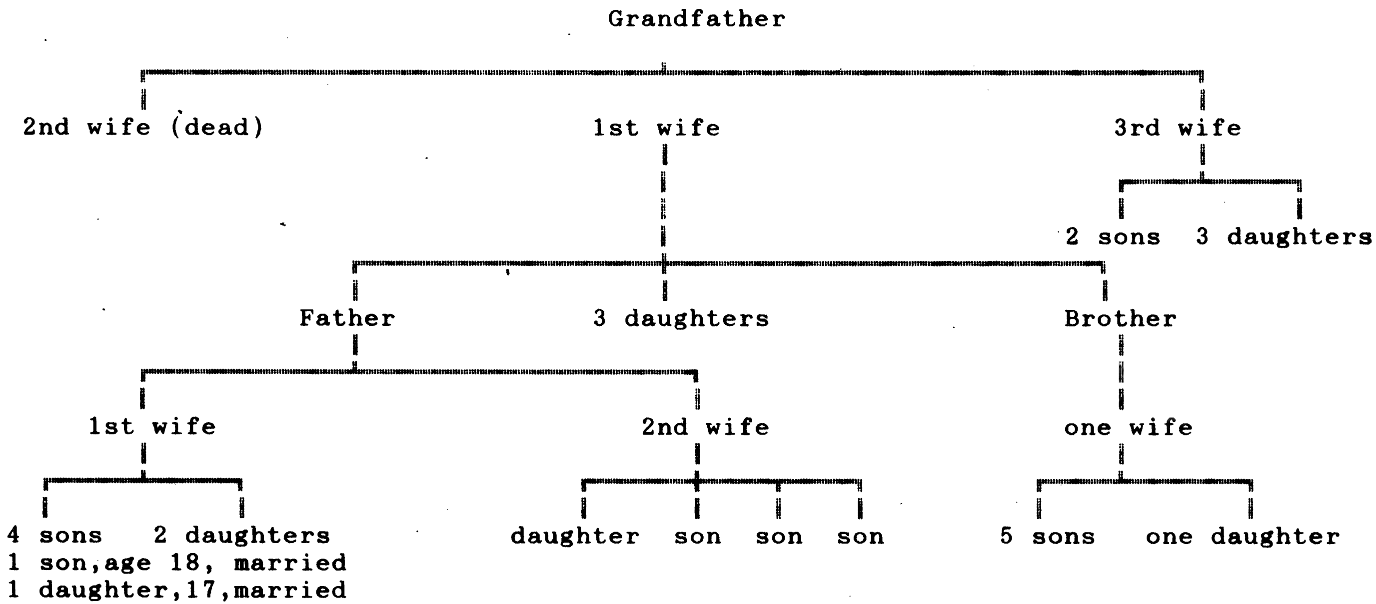
APPENDIX 2

Munda Family



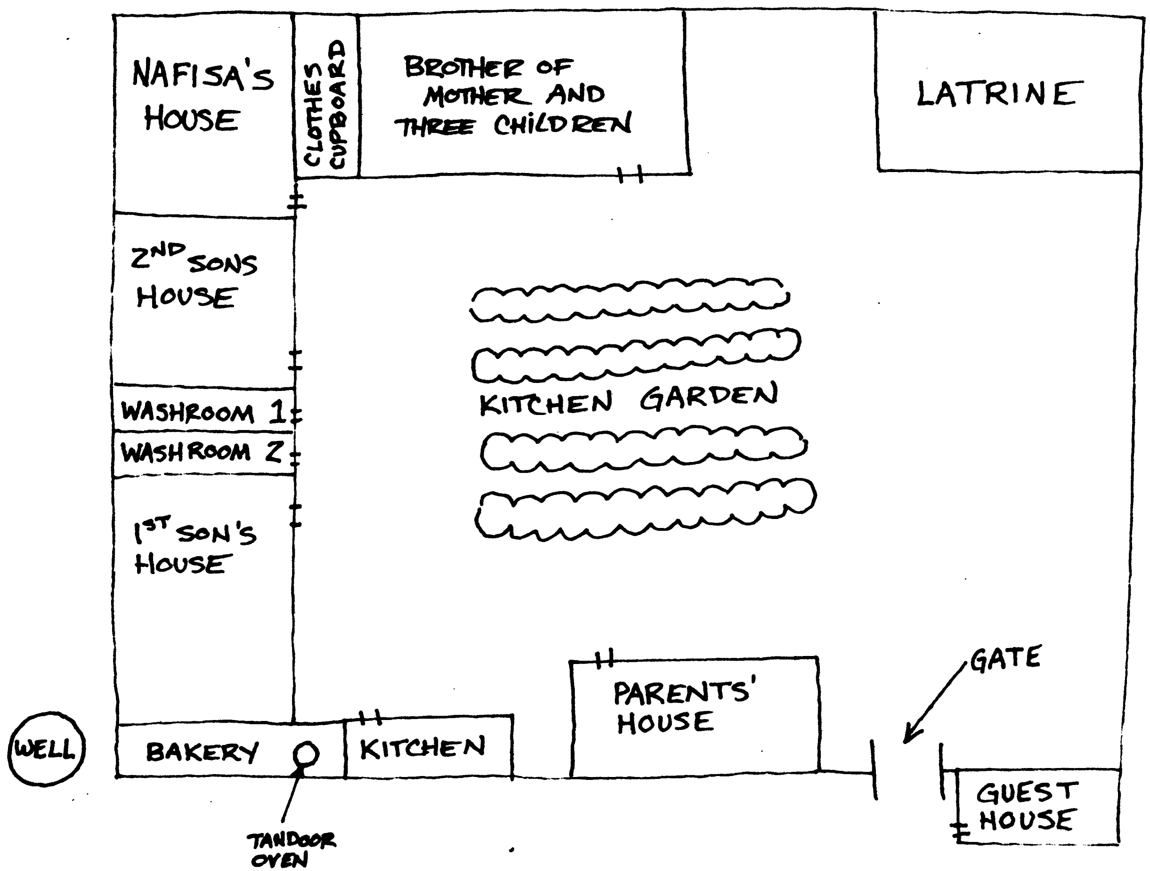
APPENDIX 3

Akora Khattak Family



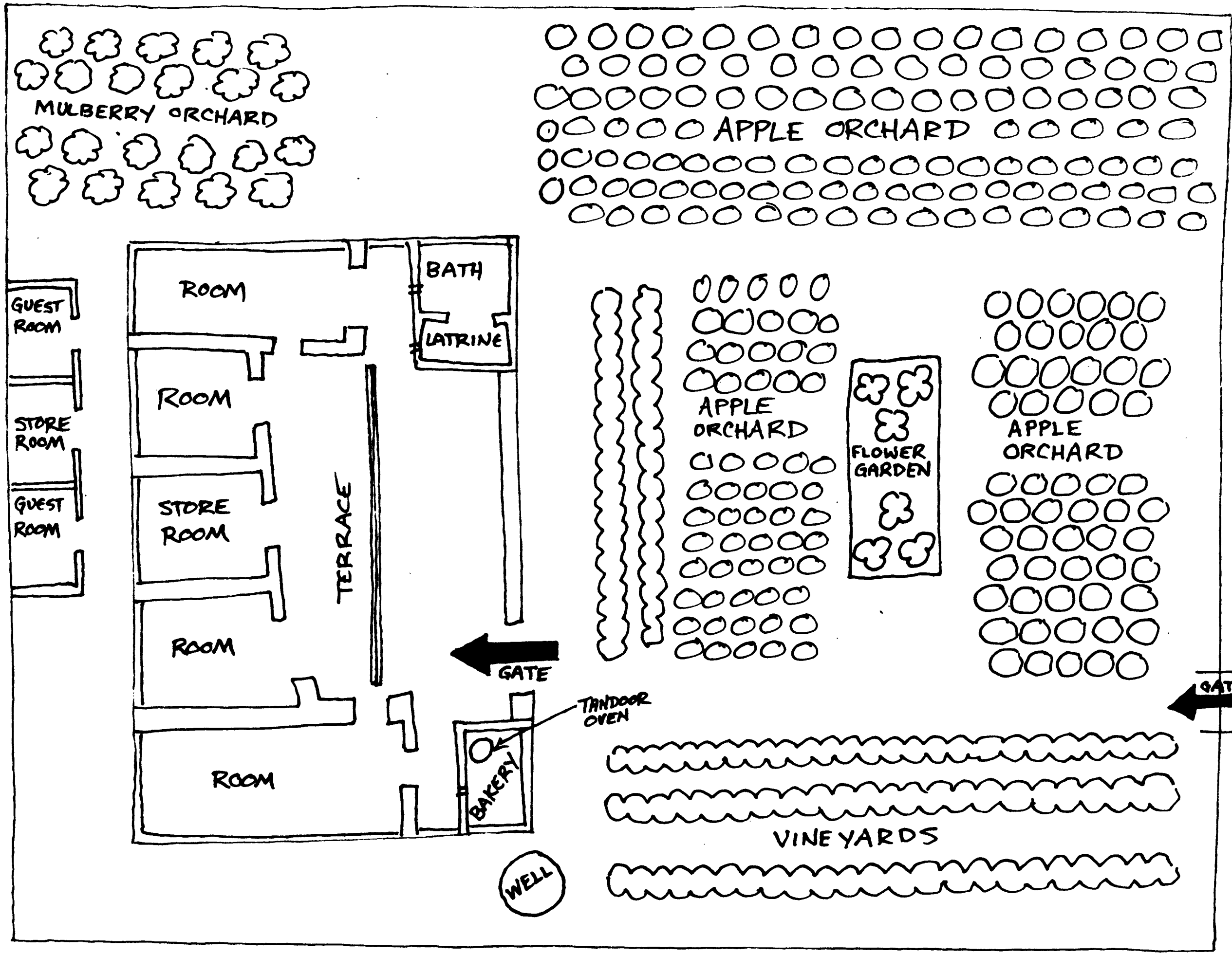
APPENDIX A:

contains 17 people, one well and electricity



Refugee Camp Compound - Nasir Bagh Family

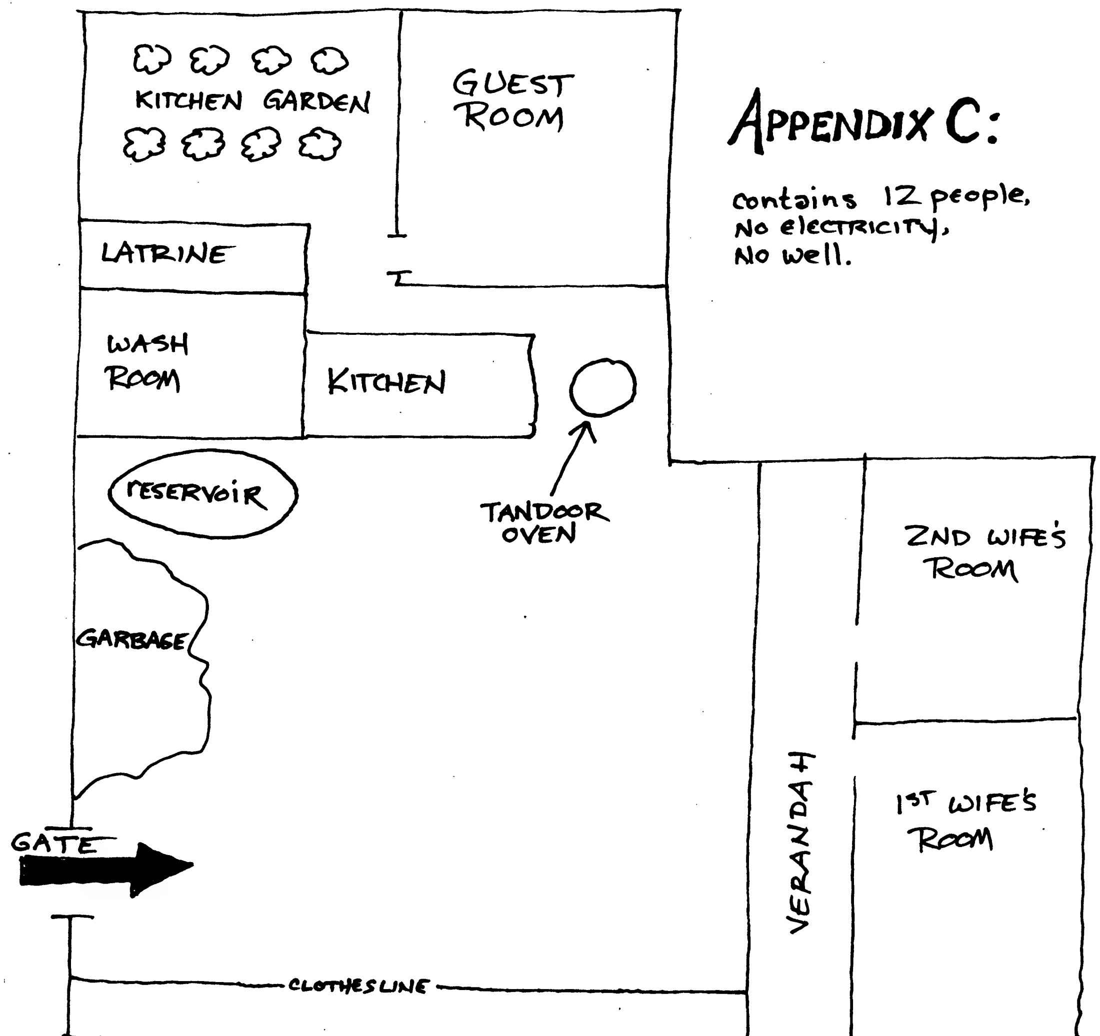
APPENDIX B: contained 15 people, electricity, A well



Compound in Afghanistan - Nasir Bagh Family

APPENDIX C:

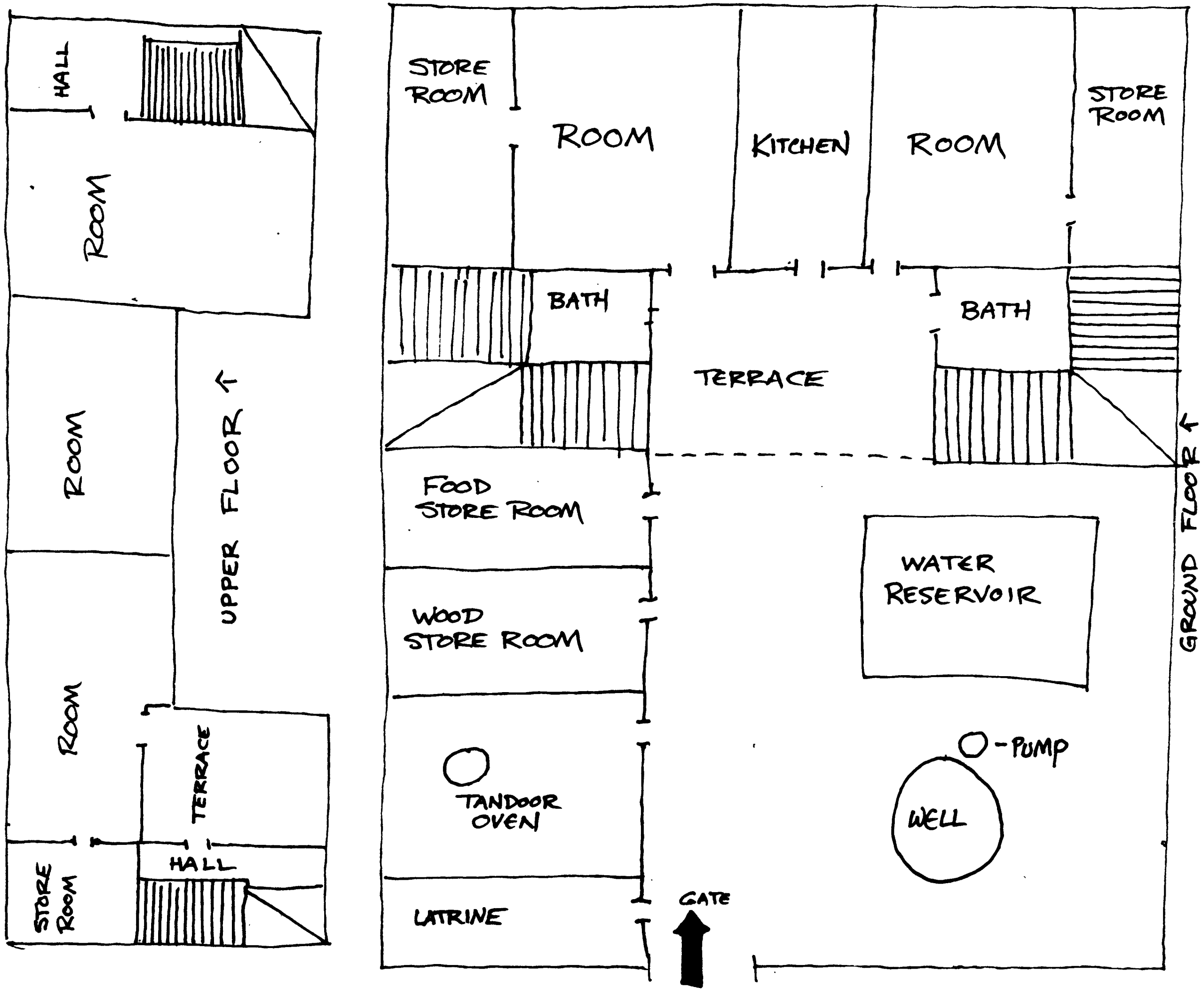
contains 12 people,
No electricity,
No well.



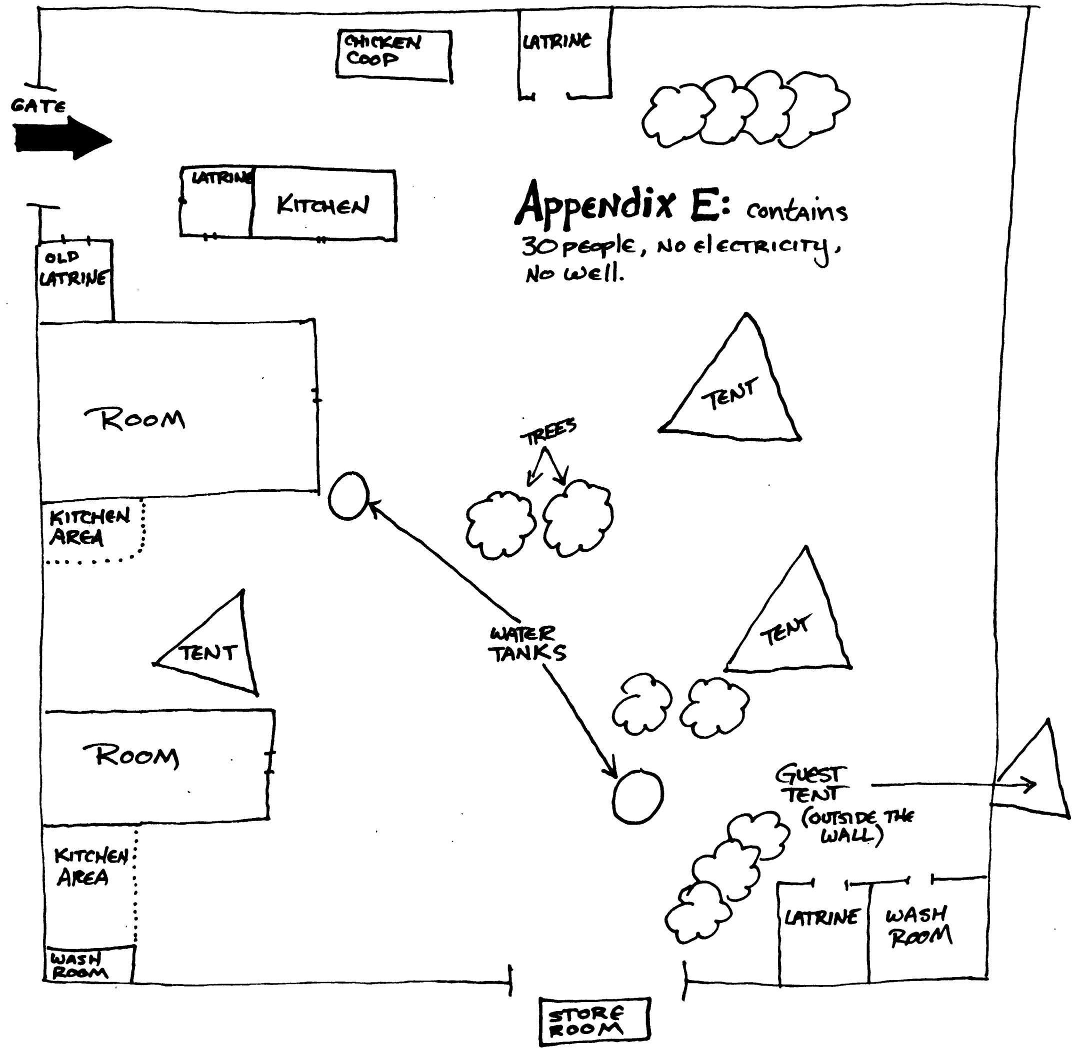
Refugee Camp Compound - Munda Family

Appendix D:

contains 10 people, electricity, one well, a pump, and a reservoir



Refugee Camp Compound - Akora Khattak Family



II. REPORT OF FIELD STUDY ON

AFGHAN WOMEN'S LIFE IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN NWFP

The field work, in November 1987, consisted of a 27 day survey in three different refugee camps in NWFP: Nasir Bagh, Akora Khattak and Munda.

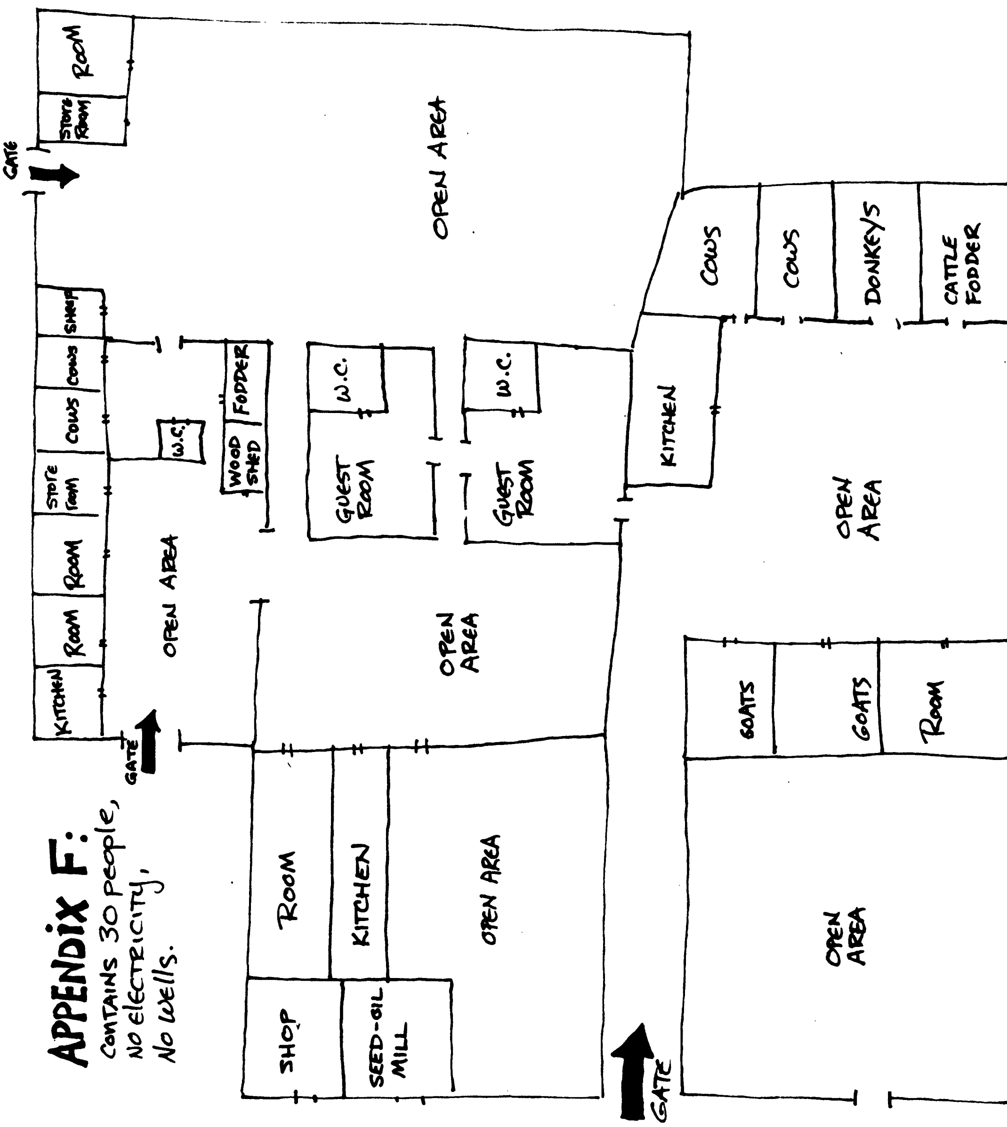
A single family in each of the three camps was selected, each from a different ethnic group: Tajik, Uzbek and Pashtoon. The information was gathered over a nine day "live-in" period (three days at a time on three different occasions) with each family at each refugee village. An interpreter worked throughout this time with Ms. Isabelle Moussard, who conducted the study.

The primary purpose of these live-in stays was to get an overview of the organisation of family life and what changes in their way of life have occurred, particularly among the women refugees.

Being a woman, Ms. Moussard was able to stay in each of three family compounds with the women participating in their every day life and so get a first-hand understanding of their problems. Understanding the Farsi language and her experience of having lived in Kabul prior to the war enabled her to have a good background of the Afghan culture and permitted the establishment of a good and close relationship with the women. Communication and understanding was not a problem.

This report will be a presentation of each of the three families and will describe problems and situations peculiar to each. It presents observations based on a short time period and is not an attempt to draw conclusions, only to provide general information and perhaps some insights into the future.

Compound in Afghanistan - Akora Khattak Family



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REPORT ON THREE FAMILIES

Nasir Bagh Family

The first family (Tajik) was selected from Nasir Bagh camp just outside of Peshawar. Nasir Bagh, one of the oldest camps, is used as a showpiece and has reasonable infrastructure (electricity, water, schools, health programme).

The family arrived from Paghman (outside of Kabul) three years ago. The family owned land and was generally well off with land holdings of 26 hectares. With the exception of one son, in Iran, the entire family is now living in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Two married daughters are living in other camps in the NWFP and the family visits each other often. The family structure is shown in Appendix 1.

The family with whom I stayed has 17 members: the father, his two wives, seven sons, three of his daughters, two daughters-in-law and four grandchildren. They are living in a walled compound built around a communal garden area referred to locally as a "kitchen garden"; four rooms are built around this kitchen garden. The entire compound contains a "Kar-khana" or kitchen, a "tandoor-khana" where bread is baked, two primitive bathrooms and one latrine with a cement ground (this is the only such facility I encountered in any of the camps I visited).

Each of the married sons has one private room where he lives with his wife and children. The father, his second wife and young sons share another room. The last room is shared with the widowed daughter, her daughter, two unmarried sisters and the first wife.

In the same compound the brother of the second wife, his wife and their three children also have a room, although they are not part of the immediate family and will not be a part of this study.

The map of the entire compound is attached as Appendix A.

The most striking difference between life in the refugee camps and prior living conditions in Afghanistan can be seen by comparing the maps of their living compounds. The map of their homes in Paghman is attached as Appendix B.

The four adult men, father and his three sons, each have a different position within the family hierarchy. Two of the sons are married and are in charge of their own families in addition to their responsibilities to the overall family. One works in a Mujahideen party office when he is not inside of Afghanistan participating in the war of resistance, where he has the responsibility of a commander. The other is jobless and is desperately seeking some type of job in Peshawar. He also participates in the war effort inside Afghanistan. The third son, in his early twenties, is not married and is employed as a driver for a humanitarian organisation. He is the only family member providing a real income. The father, in his seventies, is not working but is the titular head of the family, a responsibility which he takes seriously and effectively. These four left the compound early each morning and were absent for most of the day, generally returning in the late afternoon.

The older brother, being an important commander in the Paghman region, is frequently host to a small group of Mujahideen (resistance fighters) who stay in a guest room built on the outside of the compound wall. These 'guests' are fed and taken care of by the family. This increases the financial and physical burden on the family itself. The number of such guests fluctuated from five to nine during my three stays in the compound. The men upon returning from their day's activities would spend a short time with the women and then join their guests for the remainder of the evening, including meals. Both the men and women frequently informed me that if there were no guests, the men would spend their time and take meals together as a family unit. However, the strong cultural traditions of treating guests with respect compelled them to stay with such people. With Mujahideen rotating frequently from Afghanistan to Pakistan, there are nearly always such guests. This too is a significant change from normal life in Afghanistan prior to the war.

As the sons themselves are all members of the Mujahideen they spend long periods of time, from three to six months, inside of Afghanistan. The husband of one daughter was in fact killed in Afghanistan and is remembered as "shaheed" or "martyr to the Jehad". As a result of his death, the daughter has returned with her three year old girl to her father's family.

The women therefore spend nearly ten hours of each day without the men, alone within the compound walls. In this particular case, seven women and their children are working, eating and running the household together - the father's two wives, three daughters and the wives of the two sons. There is a strict division of duties among these women. They each have a specific role in family life according to age, social position

and their inter-relation with the dominant woman, the mother. This 'pecking order' is predetermined by the cultural traditions.

Some explanation is required for what on the surface appears confusing. The father had at one time three wives. The first, Mazari, died after a few months of marriage which produced no children. The second wife, Pari, a tiny older woman, has one son who lives as a refugee in Iran where he is married and has children. He left many years ago and the details of his family, number of children, etc. is not known.

The third wife, Rogul, is the dominant woman of the family. She is in effect the 'queen' of the household. She has 11 children. Daytime family life revolves around her. She does not work. She spends her time sitting in her home drinking tea, praying, doting on her children and grandchildren, punishing them when required and giving orders and supervising the other women to ensure things are accomplished in the proper manner. She is not formally educated and she wished to have her daughters educated, but her husband refused to allow this. She intends to insist that her grand-daughters be educated. This is probable because education facilities exist in the refugee camp. She did learn to read the Koran with one of her sons. She prays a lot and is very interested in learning about other religions. She often asks questions on life outside of her walls and on life overseas. If a visitor comes to the compound, she is the person to go to the gate to greet them, after first covering her face in the traditional manner.

She is respected and loved by the rest of the family and many aspects of her relationship with them is similar to Western concepts of a grandmother.

The second wife is the lowest in the family hierarchy. Her daily routine is relegated to caring for the very young children and babies. She has no room of her own and shares space with the unmarried daughters. They refer to her as "small mother", a great contrast with the other who is "the queen". The term 'small mother' is appropriate to her not only for her place in the family society but is accurate as a physical description. She is a quiet woman and the others told me she is regularly depressed about the absence of her son.

Nafissa, the widowed daughter, ranks right behind the two elder women. This ranking is a direct result of the war's influence on family life. As the widow of a "shaheed" or martyr, her status has increased. War widows have a special and respected position. However, her situation presents a complex relationship. She had three children. Two died while very young. She was married for three years and now has one young daughter. She has no special occupation or duties within the family. She is respected by the others, but she must also deal

with the fact that she is a young woman with a child and no husband which also means no income, which is a real and hard problem. She is completely dependent upon the family for her existence.

Remarriage is a possible solution for Nafissa but she would have additional problems with the family, who would want custody of her child were she to remarry. She has no formal education but she has many ideas for her future. She expects to marry again and have more children and dreams of living in Kabul should the war ever end. She wants her daughter to go to school and even to follow higher education. For now she spends her time roaming the compound helping her younger sisters, raising her child and dreaming of her and her daughter's future and thinking of their situation. She chastises herself for such thoughts, saying that "thinking is bad, and she should just be working, not thinking". She misses her home and the independence of being a married woman even though the family accepts her into their fold, takes care of her financially, demonstrates affection and does not require a full load of work. She is now back under the authority of her father and brothers. It is, in many ways, a return to childhood. She feels frustrated and the tension of being a young Afghan widow and a refugee in Pakistan shows on her face.

Her two younger sisters, however, demonstrate a degree of jealousy, thinking it unfair she is not given specific day-to-day duties. These two sisters, in their early twenties, have no significant status within the family. They are uneducated and were not betrothed before they left Afghanistan and there is no promise of marriage in the immediate future. They are responsible, along with their brothers' wives, for the cooking, preparation of "nan" or bread, and other household chores such as cleaning, washing, etc.

They work in teams of two: one daughter and one sister-in-law. Each team works two days and this arrangement appears to work well.

The wife of the eldest son has just had her third child after eight years of marriage. She seems well involved in family life, she works as described above and cares for her children. Her children are clean and healthy. She is a quiet person and respectful with the elders of the family.

The same description applies to the second brother's wife. But, married for just five months and being four months pregnant, she is very quiet and does not talk much with other family members. Tension exists between her and the mother, particularly during meals, when the mother would dictate her diet for her pregnancy. She spent much time alone in her room knitting after she finished her daily chores.

These women cannot be presented as just seven different persons living in a community of one family. They are primarily, and as dictated by tradition, part of a tribe, part of a country. They are Afghans with a culture and background and, as such, they are culturally the same people who left Afghanistan three years ago. But they are also very different for, as I met them, they were Afghan women refugees living in a refugee camp in Pakistan. Being a refugee is not just an idea, but a fact of life. A fact in each day's life when you miss space, windows, doors, food and health care. When 17 persons live off one source of income and when a very respectable mother and grandmother says, "We cannot go out, it is not our country." In this situation the purdah system is significant. It is a protection in front of new people, new rules. It is not an obligation in this family, as the women themselves said, and before it was not so strict, but here they decided themselves to make it strict as a defensive protection. Their main complaint relating to their refugee status is the material changes between their life in the camp and their life at home "on their own land."

The main conversations we had were illustrating many problems, some not related to their refugee status. If you ask a young Afghan widow who has had the experience of marriage what for her is a good husband, she replies: "He has to bring back enough money, come home in the evening and love' his' children." This, in a way, gives an accurate description of her relationship with her husband. Western views of husband and wife are not relevant in this society. While respect exists between them, the only real bond is the children. After many years a type of friendship appears. This is not true for every couple as the weddings, nearly always, have been arranged by the families. It is therefore easy to understand why the relationships are not always easy.

The relationship between parents and children is based upon respect, affection and communication. Between brothers and sisters there is also respect and in a way a bond or comraderie between them. Here it is appropriate to note that when a mother of two boys and two girls is asked how many children she has, she will frequently reply: "I have two". When it is pointed out that two boys and two girls can be seen, she will correct herself and say: "Oh yes, two children and two girls".

The women's main occupation is the care of their children. The first problem for the women is to keep the children alive in an environment filled with disease. They are not raised or educated to take any decisions regarding family life. Tradition and the dictates of their culture make all decisions for them in this regard.

Munda Family

The next family with whom I spent time was Pashtoon and had a very different internal structure. Only the immediate family has moved to Pakistan: the father, his two wives and their nine children. He has been married for 20 years with the first wife and seven years with the second. The father has been in Pakistan for three years with the second wife. The first wife arrived to join them one year ago, bringing her children with her. The family structure is shown in Appendix 2.

The father, who was previously employed in a grocery shop in Kabul, is now working in a humanitarian organisation's workshop. As in the first family, the main complaint about their situation is material. It is understandable when you compare the situation in which they were living before in Afghanistan with their life today in a refugee camp. See Appendices C & D.

In answer to my questions about their day to day life, both women responded, "Life is very hard, there isn't any money. None of the children are attending school. The 16 year old boy is working in a shop in the camp bazaar. We only have one change of clothing."

When I asked them precise comparisons about life before and after leaving Afghanistan they are not really able to relate accurate descriptions. They talk of electricity, fresh fruit, water, etc. Because the problems are the basic needs of life it is difficult for them to consider more subtle differences. One of the wives told me later she was not comparing the two lives because she was not talking about Afghanistan to her two children. Why? She shrugs her shoulders and says: "There is not any answer, it is like that."

Life has a regular routine. They waken at six o'clock, start cleaning and preparing breakfast (I did not witness the women of this family praying in the morning as I did those of the other families). After breakfast, they washed dishes, cleaned their rooms and then began organising the day of preparing food, baking bread and so on every day.

The two wives attempt to share the work, when they are not fighting or arguing with each other. The disputes are mainly over their separate children who are crying, fighting and teasing each other constantly.

In their daily routine they do not take time to think of their situation. They do not want to do this, as they have been told all their life that it was bad. During the daily chores we talked constantly about my life. Their questions, particularly about my personal hygiene, gave me the opportunity to ask similar

AFGHAN WOMEN CULTURE AND LIFE

Survey and a Resource Compilation of Information

ISABELLE MOUSSARD

A R C

Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees

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PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1987

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